



Sgt. Brian E. McElaney

(Above) Lemonier Forward Tom Hutchinson tries to dodge a Dammerjog player during an exhibition soccer game March 6. Hutchinson scored two of Lemonier's three points. (Left) Lemonier Forward Hugh Oliphant drives down field past several Dammerjog defenders. Oliphant made the first goal in the early minutes of the game.

# SOCCER - kicking down language barriers

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Sports like soccer have their own language, which has the power to traverse cultural divides, bringing two worlds together where they can leave their differences behind and share in friendly competition.

More than 20 people from the nearby community of Dammerjog, Djibouti, came aboard Camp Lemonier Sunday to play an exhibition game against the camp soccer team.

Shortly after 4:30 p.m., the game kicked off, with Lemonier gaining the first key possession. Within the first minutes of the game, Lemonier Forward Hugh Oliphant bypassed several defenders for a well-placed one-on-one breakaway to score, giving Lemonier the early lead.

Lemonier kept their momentum, attempting several shots on goal, but the Dammerjog goalkeeper wasn't allowing anything through. The same was true on the other side of the field, as Lemonier Goalie Shawn Bowen often sacrificed his body to cover the ball.

In the early part of the game, Lemonier seemed to rely on Oliphant's ability to get a breakaway, but the Dammerjog defenders moved up field forcing Oliphant offsides more often than not.

Midway through the first half, Dammerjog

charged the goal, squaring up against several defenders. Bowen blocked one kick on goal, but couldn't counteract the offensive force as Dammerjog Forward Ilyas Ahmed slipped the ball in to score, tying the game, 1-1.

Lemonier quickly recovered, but Dammerjog wasn't letting up. After several minutes of going back and forth, Lemonier brought the ball downfield. Ty Neal avoided a defender on a quick pass to Tom Hutchinson, who slammed the ball past the Dammerjog goalkeeper to give Lemonier the lead, 2-1, at the end of the half.

"We play slow and methodic; they run and gun and swarm the ball like bees," said Lemonier coach and player Dennis Larson. "We need to talk to one another. We need that connection between the mids and forwards."

Dammerjog started off the second half, but after battling for the ball, Lemonier took it down field. Lemonier drove the ball, but Dammerjog's able goalie deflected it, forcing a corner kick. Andrew Gaudy kicked the corner right to Hutchinson, who jammed it in the corner of the goal, increasing their team's lead 3-1.

Despite being down by two, Dammerjog wasn't out of steam. They got a big break by forcing a penalty kick on goal. However, the shot went wide. On a short goalie kick, Bowen



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A Dammerjog player hustles to get the ball out of dangerous territory and downfield during the March 6 exhibition soccer match against the Lemonier team.

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